

3.9 Safety

This section considers all potential impacts to the safety of future users of the site, as well as the safety of others potentially impacted by the Project. Safety impacts can include exposure to hazardous materials, location within safety zones of nearby airports, and exposure to wildfire hazards. Section 3.5, Geology, Soils and Mineral Resources, addresses potential geologic and seismic safety issues. Section 3.2 of this EIR, Air Quality, addresses potential airborne asbestos impacts. Potential safety issues associated with flooding are discussed in Section 3.10, Surface Hydrology and Water Quality. The analysis in this section is primarily based upon the following documents:

- Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) prepared by Charles Lockwood Consulting Engineer, Inc., June 8, 2004, included as **Appendix G** of this EIR.
- Twining Laboratories, Inc., December 15, 1993, included as **Appendix G** of this EIR.
- Vector Engineering, Inc., prepared December 1991, included as **Appendix G** of this EIR.
- Additional Site Assessment, prepared by GHH Engineering, Inc., March 28, 2006, included in **Appendix G** of this EIR.

Environmental Setting

Hazardous Materials

The proposed Project proposes the redevelopment of the former Bohemia Lumber Company site into a residential community consisting of 114 parcels containing detached single-family homes. The Project site is located approximately one and one-half miles north of the Auburn city limits, just east of State Route 49 (SR 49). The site is bordered by the railroad right-of-way and residential development to the north, Canal Street and residential land uses to the east, PG&E corporation yard to the south, and a lumber company and retail/commercial land use to the west.

A field reconnaissance was conducted on the Project site on May 19, 2004 by Charles Lockwood Consulting Engineer, Inc. The focus of the assessment was on the potential for hazardous substance contamination. The Project site consists of paving and foundations of prior land uses on the Project site. The Project site is part of a larger parcel originally developed with the Cal Ida Lumber Mill which began operations in 1901. In the 1970's, the property was part of the Bohemia Lumber Mill which included facilities extending west to Grass Valley Highway. Lumber Mill operations ceased in the early 1980's and the buildings on the Project site were demolished in 1983 or 1984.

The Phase I ESA prepared by Charles Lockwood Consulting Engineer, Inc. notes that the eastern portion of the property, Assessor Parcel Number (APN) 052-102-012, as shown on **Figure 3.9-1**, was historically used for log decks and outdoor lumber storage when the lumber mill was in operation. The northwest portion of the Project site, APN 052-02-013, consists of a considerable

amount of pavement and building foundations. Concrete foundations were observed during the field investigation in the northeast portion of the Project site. Two pits were also observed west of the building foundations. These pits exposed large diameter piping, possibly with asbestos wrapping. Additional building foundations were observed at the north end of the Project site.

Assessor's records indicate that a boiler house used to heat kilns was formerly located on the western portion of the Project Site. Drying kilns were located south of the boiler. The boiler was fired with sawdust; however, it is most likely that the boiler used oil or other fuels to start up.

APN 052-102-017, located on the southern portion of the Project site, historically consisted of the Dry Chain Building. To the extreme south on the Project site, approximately eight drums were observed by Charles Lockwood Consulting Engineer, Inc. along with some ducting. Some of the drums were heavy, likely containing fluids or solids.

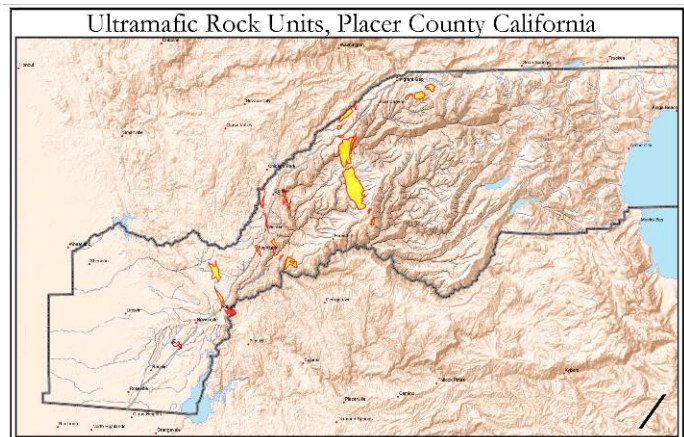
Vector Engineering, Inc. performed soil remediation at the Project site. Vector Engineering, Inc. identified that the Project site is located in an area where bedrock is present at very shallow depths, approximately one to five feet below ground surface. Groundwater is also present at very shallow depths, most likely due to Wise Canal. Seepage from the Canal has caused swampy conditions at the ground surface. Two areas of significant diesel impact were excavated.

The nearest public-use airport to the Project site is the Auburn Municipal Airport. This airport is approximately 1.5 miles north of the Project site, and the flight line has an east-to-west orientation.

Wildland Fires

Naturally occurring forest fire is a key element of many ecosystems. The benefits of forest fires include: reducing the build-up of fuel, and thus the intensity of future burns; recycling nutrients bound up in litter; reducing competition, allowing existing trees to grow larger; leaving snags that provide nesting spots for birds; sprouting seeds of native plants, and, killing non-native plants that are not adapted to fire. However, as new development occurs within and adjacent to high fire hazard areas the threat to lives and property increases significantly.

The Auburn/Bowman Community Plan Environmental Impact Report states that the Auburn/Bowman area is susceptible to wildland fires due to a combination of flammable vegetation, steep terrain, dry climate, and the presence of structures in the Auburn/Bowman area. The Placer Consolidated Fire Protection District has designated the Project site as being within the Local Responsibility Area (LRA). These are areas in which local agencies have sole responsibility for fire suppression activities. Areas that are not federal or State responsibility are commonly referred to as LRA. The Project site is not located in an area designated as an extremely high fire hazard area.¹



Source: Placer County web site: www.placercounty.net



**Figure 3.9-1
Historic Uses**

Asbestos

Naturally occurring asbestos occurs throughout foothill areas of Placer County and surrounding mountain counties. The adverse health effects of asbestos fibers are well known. These substances are known to occur in the Auburn and Foresthill areas and in the Tahoe National Forest.² Earth disturbance can release asbestos, creating a potentially hazardous situation for construction workers and others in the immediate vicinity. The Project site is underlain by Paleozoic to Mesozoic metavolcanic rocks (commonly referred to as greenstone) and ultramafic rocks (serpentine). The western portion of the site is generally covered by weathered asphalt pavement, gravel, or concrete. Outcrops of greenstone exist on-site at the ground surface in the southeast portion of the subject site and exposed serpentine lies along a scarp in the west central portion of the Project area. A Phase I ESA prepared for the Project site corroborates that a portion of the Project site is underlain by ultramafic rock (serpentine), which may contain naturally occurring asbestos (NOA).³ A Geotechnical Investigation Report prepared for the Project site provides guidance for reducing the impact related to NOA. Impacts and mitigation related to airborne, naturally occurring asbestos are included in the Air Quality section of this EIR, Section 3.2.

Regulatory Setting

Agencies with Jurisdiction over Hazardous Materials Related Issues

Hazardous materials and waste regulations are implemented by a number of government agencies including, but not limited to, the following:

- United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA);
- California Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – Division of Toxic Substances Control;
- Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB);
- Placer County Environmental Health Services;
- Placer County Air Pollution Control District (Air District)⁴
- California Highway Patrol;
- Placer County Sheriff's Department; and,
- Local fire departments.

Each of the aforementioned agencies has established regulations regarding the proper transportation, handling, management, use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials for specific operations and activities.

Methodology

A Phase I ESA was performed by Charles Lockwood Consulting Engineer, Inc. This ESA was performed in conformance with all of the components of the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) Standard Practice E1527-00 scope of work, and was completed in June 2004.

The property was inspected to identify visible evidence of chemical occurrence, such as stains, chemical containers, and debris. Property inspections included an inspection of the property, an interview of the property owner, and a cursory inspection of adjacent parcels.

Regulatory agency files were reviewed to determine if any investigations associated with hazardous substances or petroleum product use have been performed at the Project site or at nearby locations which could impact the Project site. Agency records were reviewed for historic information regarding the property.

In addition, Charles Lockwood Consulting Engineer, Inc. contacted several agencies involved with hazardous materials for records connected to the Project site. These included the California State Library, Placer County Assessor's Office, Placer County Planning Department, PG&E Rock Creek Yard, Former Planer Mill (Bohemia Inc.), Auburn Equipment Rental, Payne Property, Exxon/Nella Oil and the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Thresholds of Significance

Impacts would be considered significant if the Project:

- Creates a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, disposal of, or reasonably foreseeable release of hazardous materials;
- Emits hazardous emissions or handles hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school;
- Is located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would create a significant hazard to the public or environment;
- Results in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the Project area due to location within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public or private airport;
- Impairs implementation of, or physically interferes with, an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan; or,
- Exposes people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires.

Environmental Impact and Mitigation Measures

Impact SAFE-1 Exposure of Construction Workers, Residents, and Others to Hazardous Materials

Past lumber mill operations at the Project site could have resulted in contamination of soil and/or groundwater in some locations. Demolition, excavation, and construction activities in the area could result in the exposure of construction workers to constituents of concern and hazardous materials, including lead, cadmium, arsenic, asbestos, and petroleum hydrocarbons; elevated levels of chemicals that could be hazardous; or hazardous substances that could be inadvertently spilled or otherwise spread. In addition, if contaminated sites in the area are not remediated before occupation or use of the site, then residents and others could be exposed to hazardous materials. This impact would be **potentially significant**.

A Phase I ESA was prepared for the project site in November 2004 (Charles Lockwood Consulting Engineer, Inc. 2004). The records search conducted for the Phase I ESA did not find documentation of RECs in soil or groundwater associated with the historic use of the project site. Site reconnaissance conducted for the Phase I ESA recorded a considerable amount of concrete and building foundations, two pits exposing large diameter pipes potentially wrapped in asbestos in the northern portion of the project site, old tires scattered throughout the property, and eight drums with unknown contents on the south side of the project site.

A review of regulatory agency lists indicated the presence of eight leaking underground storage tanks (LUSTs) within one-half mile of the project site. Five of these LUST sites were closed, indicating these tanks and any contaminated soils were removed. The remaining three LUST sites remain open. No adverse impacts on the project site were identified in conjunction with these LUSTs (Charles Lockwood Consulting Engineer, Inc. 2004).

The Phase I ESA identified the project site as a recognized environmental condition given its previous use as a lumber mill (Charles Lockwood Consulting Engineer, Inc. 2004). Based on this conclusion, the Placer County EHS required a Limited Phase II ESA conducted. Soil samples collected at various depths throughout the project site did not identify any detectable levels of volatile organic compounds (VOCs), semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs), or polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). Small amounts of motor oil were identified in the west and southwest edges of the project site. Sampling detected several constituents of concern (COC) at the project site, namely nickel, zinc, chromium, mercury, lead, cadmium, and arsenic. Of these COCs, lead, cadmium, and arsenic were identified in levels above their California Health Screening Levels indicating that these COCs could potentially be harmful to human life and the environment.

Most lumber mill operations include USTs, dipping of lumber in preservatives, and landfiling of ash and lumber wastes; therefore, the likelihood that previously undiscovered USTs or contaminated soils existing on the site is high (Charles Lockwood Consulting Engineer, Inc. 2004). Development of the project would involve site grading, excavation for utilities, trenching, dewatering of open trenches, backfilling, demolition of building foundations, and construction of new residences. Excavation and construction activities at or near areas of currently recorded or unrecorded soil and/or groundwater contamination could expose construction workers to hazardous materials.

Large diameter pipes potentially wrapped in asbestos were identified in the northern portion of the project site. Asbestos-containing materials could become friable or mobile during demolition activities and come into contact with construction workers.

If areas identified as potentially having contaminated soil and/or groundwater are not remediated, future residents and others could come into contact with and be exposed to hazardous materials. Because of the potential presence of COCs, including lead, cadmium, and arsenic, and other hazardous materials on the site, in the soil, or in the groundwater, this impact would be **potentially significant**.

Mitigation Measure SAFE-1

- A risk assessment shall be completed prior to the approval of improvement plans or equivalent approval. Risk assessments shall include a DTSC Preliminary Endangerment Assessment or no further action determination, or equivalent. Any required remediation shall include a DTSC Remedial Action Workplan or equivalent, and can include a range of activities, including restrictions on use, soil excavation and disposal off-site, or encapsulation. If required, the remedial action shall be completed and certified by DTSC prior to the recordation of the subdivision final map.
- If during site preparation and construction activities previous undiscovered or unknown evidence of hazardous materials contamination is observed or suspected through either obvious or implied measures (i.e., stained or odorous soil), construction activities shall immediately cease in the area of the find.
- Placer County Environmental Health Services staff shall be immediately consulted, and the project applicant shall contract with a qualified consultant registered in DTSC's Registered Environmental Assessor Program to assess the situation. If necessary, risk assessments shall include a DTSC Preliminary Endangerment Assessment or no further action determination, or equivalent. Any required remediation shall include a DTSC Remedial Action Workplan or equivalent. Based on consultation between the Registered Environmental Assessor and DTSC, remediation of the site shall be conducted consistent with all applicable regulations.
- Prior to Improvement Plan approval, a Note shall be placed on the Improvement Plans to indicate that if at any time during the course of constructing the proposed project, evidence of soils and/or groundwater contamination with hazardous material is encountered, the applicant shall immediately stop the project and contact the EHS Hazardous Materials Section. The project shall remain stopped until there is resolution of the contamination problem to the satisfaction of EHS and the Central Valley RWQCB.

Implementation of this mitigation measure would remove any known or previously undiscovered contaminated soil or other hazardous materials from the site in accordance with County standards and would reduce the potential hazards associated with known or unknown contaminated soil or other hazardous materials to a **less-than-significant** level.

Impact SAFE-2 Release of Hazardous Materials into Environment

The proposed Project is a residential subdivision and would not involve any activities that would release hazardous emissions. Typically, such projects do not release significant amounts of hazardous materials into the environment. Household cleaners and solvents, motor vehicle fluids, and lawn and garden fertilizers and pesticides would likely be used by residents of the Project site. However, the amounts of hazardous materials that would be released by their use would be relatively minor. Proper use and application of these substances per manufacturer's instructions would further reduce any potential impacts.

Substances considered hazardous may be released during construction activities, mainly from leaks and spills of fuels or oils. Such spills would be relatively minor. Moreover, the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) required for the Project will include measures to control leaks and spills.

Rocks containing asbestos on-site, if disturbed, could release asbestos fibers into the environment if not properly controlled. The "Asbestos Airborne Toxic Control Measure (ATCM) for Construction, Grading, Quarrying, and Surface Mining Operations" was developed to prevent against hazardous situations resulting from earth disturbance in areas containing naturally occurring asbestos. The ATCM requires the Project applicant to prepare an Asbestos Dust Mitigation Plan, which is reviewed and subject to approval by the Air District. The Asbestos ATCM requires dust control practices in areas where asbestos is found or likely to be found.⁵ Rule 228, Fugitive Dust, enforced by the Air District, also contains measures to protect against exposure to airborne naturally occurring asbestos. Please refer to the Air Quality section of this EIR, which addresses these impacts in greater detail. With the application of existing regulations, the impact related to asbestos is **less than significant**.

Impact SAFE-3 Potential Airport Hazards

As previously described in Section 3.6, Land Use, Planning, Population, and Housing, the nearest public-use airport to the Project site is the Auburn Municipal Airport located to the north of the Project site. This airport is approximately 1.5 miles north of the Project site, and the flight line has an east-to-west orientation. Therefore, the Project site is not within any flight lines or within any flight safety zones established around Auburn Airport. Other airports in the vicinity are located farther away. There are no private airstrips in the vicinity of the Project site. Therefore, impacts related to airport hazards are **less than significant**.

Impact SAFE-4 Potential Wildland Fire Hazard

Currently, the site consists of remnant uses including areas of concrete foundations, asphalt paving, concrete roads, parking pads, and cut and fill slopes. The concrete and asphalt foundations, pads and roads have not been well maintained and are in varying states of disrepair. Several trees are located on site, primarily along Fiddler Green Canal, along the southwestern and western portion of the site. Two larger trees are located in the southeastern portion of the site. The remainder of the site consists of grasses and weeds. Development of the undeveloped Project site would virtually eliminate the existing fire hazard that exists due to dry flammable vegetation and dry climate.

The Project site is adjacent to existing residential and commercial development. The railroad right-of-way and residential development are located to the north, Canal Street and residential land uses

are located to the east, PG&E corporation yard is located to the south and a lumber company and retail/ commercial land uses are located to the west. There is virtually no vacant land immediately adjacent to the Project site which could pose a potential wildland fire hazard to the Project site. Therefore, wildland fire hazard impacts are considered to be **less than significant**.

Impact SAFE-5 Interference with Emergency Response Plans and Evacuation Routes

Emergency response planning includes the ability to effectively evacuate the Project site and the vicinity in the event of an emergency. Among the agencies that would likely coordinate such responses are the Placer County Sheriff's Department and the Placer Consolidated Fire Protection District. Although no specific emergency evacuation routes have been designated by the County, it is expected that SR 49 would be the main evacuation route in the event of an emergency in the area.

The Project site would have one access point at the southern point of contact with Canal Street. Streets will have a pavement (travel) width of 32 feet, with curb, gutter, and sidewalk within a 46-foot wide right-of-way. In addition, emergency access would be provided from the west across one of the two existing bridges and easements over the Wise Canal.

Implementation of the proposed Project would not interfere with the County's established Emergency Response Plans. Furthermore, Placer County and the Placer Consolidated Fire Protection District participate in mutual aid agreements with the City of Auburn Fire Department and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF). In the event of a natural or man made disaster, local, State, and federal agencies have in-place contingency plans to manage the situation. Impacts on emergency response or emergency evacuation would be **less than significant**.

Impact SAFE-6 Canal and Railroad Hazards

The site abuts Wise Canal and will include a detention basin. The possibility of people falling into these water bodies and drowning constitutes a hazard. The Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) passes by the site; another hazard is the possibility that people who wander from the site onto the railroad tracks will be struck by a passing train. For these reasons, the hazards presented by the Canal and the UPRR are considered **potentially significant**.

Mitigation Measure SAFE-6

Six-foot high chain link fences shall be erected around the detention basin, between the Wise Canal and residential sections of the site, and between the UPRR and residential sections of the site. Ongoing maintenance shall be the responsibility of the Homeowners' Association.

After the implementation of this mitigation measure, the danger posed to residents of and visitors to the site by these water bodies and by the UPRR will be **less than significant**.

Impact SAFE-7 Mosquito and Insect Hazards

The Project design will include a detention basin that presents a potential nuisance to residents due to the increased amount of standing water that will now be located on site. The increase in the amount of stagnant water could potentially lead to an increase in aquatic insects and other insects that favor water such as mosquitoes. The basins create a hazard in this regard that is **potentially significant**. Mitigation Measure SAFE-7 will reduce these impacts to a level that is **less than significant**.

Mitigation Measure SAFE-7

The applicant shall coordinate with Placer Mosquito Abatement District (PMAD) in the construction and operations phases of the Project. The applicant will be responsible for coordination with PMAD regarding mosquito control measures for the Project area following completion of Project construction. Consultation and coordination with PMAD shall include the following actions:

- Consult with PMAD during the Project design phase to incorporate design elements of detention basins to reduce the mosquito production potential of the Project. Measures considered should include designing water delivery and drainage systems.
- Consult with PMAD to develop and implement feasible measures to reduce the likelihood of ponding of surface water in the Project area during the construction period and to implement other mosquito abatement measures that are compatible with construction activities.
- Permit PMAD to have access to the Project area to monitor or control mosquito populations.
- Regularly consult with PMAD to identify mosquito management problems, mosquito monitoring and abatement procedures, and opportunities to adjust water management practices in detention basins to reduce mosquito production during problem periods.

Notes and References

- ¹ Randy Smith, Placer Consolidated Fire Protection District, Fire Chief. Personal correspondence with P&D Consultants, July 13, 2005.
- ² Placer County Air Pollution Control District. *Topical Report*. February, 2004.
- ³ Espana Geotechnical Consulting. *Phase I Environmental Site Assessment Update for the Proposed Bohemia Residential Development Project, Auburn, California*. November 2004.
- ⁴ The Placer County Air Pollution Control District is involved with ensuring public safety in situations where earth disturbance would occur in areas of naturally occurring asbestos. For more information, please consult: <http://www.placer.ca.gov/airpollution/2005/3-30-05-naturally-occurring-asbestos.pdf>.
- ⁵ Please consult the following for more information: www.arb.ca.gov/toxics/asbestos.htm.